COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

# DIGEST

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**Helsinki Commission Co-Chair Dennis DeConcini speaks with Democratic Party Chairman Sali Berisha in front of the party's Tirana headquarters.**

## CSCE staff observes historic elections in Albania

On March 31, Helsinki Commission staff members observed Albania's first multi-party elections since the 1920's. At stake were all 250 seats in the unicameral People's Assembly; 231 deputies were elected on March 31, with 18 seats decided in runoff elections on April 7 and one last seat on April 14. There was no popular vote for the president of the country, who is chosen instead by the new Assembly.

The elections represent a major step in the relatively new but rapidly developing process of democratization in Albania, fueled by popular discontent with the existing economic and political situation in the country. After decades of repressive rule by the Communist regime, real changes began in early 1990, including the release of several hundred political prisoners, easing of travel restrictions and permitting of religious practices for the first time since Albania proclaimed itself an atheist state in 1967.

Five new, independent political parties formed to participate in the elections. The Democratic Party was by far the largest of these opposition parties, followed by the Republican Party. The smaller parties included an Agrarian Party, an Ecology Party and Omonia, a group representing the interests of Albania's Greek minority.

The elections brought to Albania an unprecedented degree of open, public debate on the future of the country. Moreover, according to Helsinki Commission observers, the voting and counting of ballots on election day were, for the most part, orderly and correct. However, they said the election process fell short of international standards for free and fair elections, as described in the Concluding Document of the Copenhagen CSCE Meeting on the Human Dimension, held last June. For example, there was continued government control and manipulation of the media, as well as reports of intimidation of voters and opposition party representatives in the countryside.

The ruling Communist Party, called the Party of Labor, won 169 seats, assuring the critical two-thirds of the 250 Assembly seats necessary to pass constitutional changes and, in effect, to rule the country without need of a coalition. The Democratic Party, however, won 75 seats, enough to become Albania's first organized and vocal opposition. Omonia won five seats, and the Committee of Veterans, formerly a front organization tied to the Communists, won one seat.

The results came as a shock to many Albanians, since the Democratic Party believed it would win a parliamentary majority despite the absence of a truly free and fair election environment. While the opposition did do extremely well in urban centers, the Party of Labor dominated the rural regions. This was due in part to whatever direct or indirect intimidation of voters may have taken place. The fear of risks involved with the radical economic changes proposed by the Democratic Party was also a factor.

Democratic Party supporters rallied behind their leaders in the days after the elections. Police and military units used force to break up street protests in Tirana, Durres and other major cities.

The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe by law monitors and encourages progress in implementing the provisions of the Helsinki human rights accords. The Commission, created in 1976, is made up of nine Senators, nine Representatives and one official each from the Departments of State, Commerce and Defense.

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The worst violence occurred in the northern city of Shkoder, where several individuals were killed and dozens wounded after the police fired upon peaceful demonstrators. A local Democratic Party leader was shot and killed by a gunman from the city's Party of Labor building while trying to mediate with the authorities. In response, angered protesters set two armored personnel carriers on fire and sacked the ruling party's headquarters. Tens of thousands attended the funeral of those killed in the incident, and the Democratic Party, which has turned down an offer to participate in forming a new government, boycotted the opening of the new People's Assembly on April 15 to protest inadequate investigation of the killings.

In an April 3 statement, Helsinki Commission Co-Chairman Dennis DeConcini, who led a delegation to Albania with four other Members of Congress and a Commerce Department representative just prior to the elections, also deplored the use of violent force against peaceful demonstrators. The Co-Chairman has called for improved human rights performance by the Albanian Government before the full membership in the CSCE which Albania is seeking could be supported.

A recent Commission report states that a key question for Albania's future is whether the "population is willing to wait for further changes, especially if it is uncertain, with the Party of Labor still in power, that these changes will be taking place." Possible backsliding has become a concern in light of what seemed to be a weakening of the reform-minded segment of the Labor Party in the elections, including the defeat of Ramiz Alia, the current President of Albania and First Secretary of the party, in one election contest. Alia, however, has been elected by the Assembly to remain as President.

Government efforts to slow the pace of change would also likely limit Western foreign assistance to Albania to purely humanitarian aid, channeled directly to the population.

*—Bob Hand*

# Economic seminar in Budapest co-sponsored by Commission

Parliamentarians from the emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe gathered in Budapest, March 22–24, at the Seminar on Parliamentary Responsibility for Economic Development. The event was cosponsored by the Helsinki Commission, the Hungarian Parliament, the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity, and the Library of Congress.

Commission Co-Chairman Dennis DeConcini headed the U.S. delegation and participated in the seminar. Also at the seminar from the Commission were Rep. Bill Richardson (D–NM) and William D. Fritts, Jr., of the Department of Commerce. Rep. Helen Bentley (R–MD), Rep. Robert Dornan (R–CA), Rep. Bob McEwen (R–OH), and Rep. E. Clay Shaw (R–FL) were also members of the delegation.

The seminar brought together experts on a wide-range of monetary and structural issues related to economic development. Among the topics raised were: Democratization and Market Economies; Economic Programs for Transition to a Market Economy and the Legislative Agenda; The Bretton Woods Process and the Prioritization of Economic and Development Issues; Trade and Investment; and Privatization—A Key Process in the Establishment of a Free Market.

Co-Chairman DeConcini delivered an address on the Helsinki process and the role of CSCE in economies in transition.

"The countries of Central and Eastern Europe are faced with the challenge of not only rebuilding but also reforming their shattered economies," DeConcini told the legislators. "At this critical junction, lawmakers have an invaluable advantage which history doesn't permit very often—the freshness and the momentum of a new beginning."

Recounting the work at the 1990 CSCE Bonn Conference on Economic Cooperation, the Co-Chairman said, "the CSCE process has a valuable role to play in providing guidelines and supporting the difficult transition to pluralism, markets and integration."

*"The creation of a favorable climate for investment must be the highest priority for the newly emerging democracies."*

He told the group that "the creation of a favorable climate for investment must be the highest priority for the newly emerging democracies. And to create such a climate, the pace and content of legislation adopted by the national parliaments will be critical."

Former Senator Charles McC. Mathias, vice chairman of the International Foundation, drew on his extensive legislative experience in the U.S. Senate while explaining the difficulties parliamentarians face when attempting to set priorities.

While in Budapest, members of the Commission delegation also met with representatives of U.S. businesses to assess the climate for foreign trade and investment in the region.

During the meeting, Department of Commerce Commissioner William D. Fritts, Jr. described several new initiatives designed to assist U.S. businesses interested in investing in Central and Eastern Europe.

The business representatives, including the chairman of the recently established American Chamber of Commerce in Hungary, briefly described their individual experiences in setting up operations. For the most part, they expressed satisfaction with Hungarian economic reforms designed to attract foreign investment.

*—Ron McNamara*

# CSCE Parliament established at Madrid meeting

Some five months after the Paris Summit established the first permanent government structures of the CSCE—the Secretariat, Conflict Prevention Center and Elections Office—parliamentarians from the 34 States gathered in Madrid this month to create a CSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The idea for a parliamentary wing to complement the other new CSCE structures was put forth in the Paris CSCE Summit document of November 1990. An earlier proposal for the creation of a Parliamentary Assembly was contained in the July 1990 London Declaration of NATO Heads of State, which prescribed that such an assembly should be based exclusively on the Council of Europe. This proposal, among others in the London document, received intensive discussion prior to the Paris Summit, but no agreement was reached—primarily because of the insistence of U.S. parliamentarians that the new assembly should be an independent body not based upon any single parliamentary organization.

### U.S. lends experience

The U.S. contingent to the Madrid meeting was led by Rep. Dante Fascell (D-FL), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and former chairman of the Helsinki Commission. Working closely with Mr. Fascell was Commission Chairman Steny Hoyer (D-MD). Other members of the Commission on the delegation were Sen. Wyche Fowler (D-GA), delegation cochairman, and Rep. Edward Feighan (D-OH). Rep. Charlie Rose (D-NC), Rep. George Darden (D-GA), Rep. Jan Myers (R-KA), Rep. John Miller (R-WA), and Sen. William Roth (R-Del.) also participated.

While in Madrid, lawmakers from the 34 participating States established an independent Parliamentary Assembly "within the framework" of the CSCE. The new Assembly will utilize the resources of a number of other parliamentary institutions, including the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of WEU, the North Atlantic Assembly and the European Parliament. It will include members from each CSCE State based on their size (ranging from 17 each for the United States and the U.S.S.R., to two each for Liechtenstein, Monaco, and San Marino).

*"Parliamentarians were instrumental in creating and giving impetus to the CSCE process and in making it flourish," Fascell said. "Now is the time for us to unite our efforts in making the CSCE Parliamentary Assembly an integral and dynamic aspect of the CSCE process."*

Also agreed to in Madrid was a system of majority voting for the full Assembly, and a schedule of rotating annual meetings the first week of July, the first to be held in Budapest in 1992.

The CSCE Assembly will also have a Committee of Heads of Delegation which will make consensus decisions on all procedures, including budgetary questions, by consensus. On an exceptional basis, the Committee may communicate the substantive views of parliamentary delegations prior to the next CSCE follow-up meeting in Helsinki in the Spring of 1992. Thereafter, it will be the Parliamentary Assembly which will interface with the governmental CSCE through declarations, recommendations and proposals for implementation questions and virtually every other CSCE topic.

Two important areas where agreement was not achieved were the location and future operation of a "small, permanent secretariat" and the amount of shared costs each participating State will pay. These questions and others will be discussed at a meeting of the Committee of Heads of Delegation to be held before the first Assembly meeting in 1992. In the meantime, the Spanish Parliament will provide Secretariat services.

The meeting ended in an atmosphere of general satisfaction. All the delegations had seemed to respond in one degree or another to Chairman Fascell's words in his opening remarks to the meeting. "Parliamentarians were instrumental in creating and giving impetus to the CSCE process and in making it flourish," Fascell said. "Now is the time for us to unite our efforts in making the CSCE Parliamentary Assembly an integral and dynamic aspect of the CSCE process."

The U.S. delegation, in particular, was pleased that a CSCE Parliamentary Assembly had been created with which all the 34 parliaments, including the U.S. Congress, could participate on a comfortable and productive basis.

*—Sam Wise*

## Hoyer urges support for Baltic States

During a period of general debate at the CSCE parliamentary meeting in Madrid, Chairman Hoyer delivered a strong statement in favor of Baltic self-determination.

Taking issue with a British member of Parliament who had declared that the Baltic situation was not a proper subject for discussion at the meeting, Chairman Hoyer said that on the contrary, he found it most fitting and appropriate that the status of the Baltic States should be raised.

Furthermore, he proposed that the new CSCE Parliamentary Assembly should accord "observer status" to each of the Baltic nations.

Rep. Miller also had strong words of support for the Baltic States, saying that "we (the U.S. delegation) look forward to your resuming your role in the councils of international bodies, including this one."

*—Sam Wise*

# CFE negotiations continue, compromise likely

**Armored personnel carriers are among the weapons the Soviets are attempting to reclassify as Naval forces to exempt them from the CFE.**

After their successful conclusion at the Paris CSCE Summit last November, the Conventional Forces (CFE) and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBM) negotiations resumed in February. The backdrop was not, as had been foreseen at Paris, a new era of security and stability for Europe.

Instead, combined with the war in the Persian Gulf, events in Europe and especially the Soviet Union have turned the atmosphere in Vienna to one of uncertainty and concern. Resuming just a month after Soviet troops stormed the TV tower in Vilnius, the CSBM talks have felt the chill of actions violating the spirit of the Paris Charter. Delegations agreed that "business as usual" was impossible under the circumstances.

Also casting a shadow over CSBMs and completely halting progress on CFE is Soviet non-compliance with the treaty signed last fall. In the data exchanged in Paris and subsequently, from which reductions and inspections are calculated, the Soviets have taken it upon themselves to exempt three armored divisions from the CFE treaty, including over 3,000 tanks, artillery pieces and armored personnel carriers. They explained the exemptions on the grounds that the equipment has been reclassified as "Coastal Defense Forces," subordinate to the Navy.

While naval forces are exempt from the treaty, its provisions clearly state that all equipment held by military forces in the zone of application of the treaty will be subject to reduction. Together with Soviet omission of some other equipment assigned to non-army entities (the KGB and the strategic rocket forces among them), the Soviets are attempting to exempt over 5,000 tanks, artillery pieces and armored personnel carriers from the treaty. Many European armies hold less equipment in those categories.

The U.S. delegation to CFE has been joined by all 20 other participants in the negotiation in calling for full Soviet compliance with the treaty, which the United States has called a "cornerstone of the developing order in Europe" and "fundamental to the goals and aspirations embodied in the Charter of Paris."

The Joint Consultative Group, formed to discuss issues of treaty implementation, has met regularly to discuss the data issue since January. While no progress has been reported in that forum, strong pressure there and bilateral approaches appear to be leading to a compromise.

While the United States has maintained that it will neither go forward with a planned Bush-Gorbachev summit, nor submit the treaty to the Senate for ratification–until the dispute is resolved, others have been looking for a way out. Europeans have voiced their willingness to accept a flawed treaty rather than lose the agreed limits on equipment levels and non-refusable inspections. The new democracies of East-Central Europe have been particularly concerned to salvage the treaty, which puts maximum levels on Soviet forces in their countries and provides a cover for withdrawal of those forces.

As this issue of the Digest goes to press, the Bush administration appears to be nearing a compromise with the Soviets under which the Soviets may stick with their interpretation of the treaty in exchange for the destruction of equipment outside the zone of application for the treaty, east of the Ural mountains. This destruction would, apparently, be monitored by the West. However, in conceding the Soviet interpretation, the West would destroy the possibility of credibly protesting further violations. The administration has apparently concluded that retention of the CFE as a framework for Europe is more important than observance of its specific provisions.

With CFE on hold indefinitely, the only provisions for exchange and evaluation of military information in Europe are those negotiated among all participating States at CSBMs. On April 15, the states exchanged information on the size, weapons and structure of their military forces for the first time. Beginning July 1, states may conduct evaluation visits to check the information submitted.

*—Heather Hurlburt*

# CSCE

*in brief*

## Senator Heinz remembered

Sen. John Heinz, who served on the Helsinki Commission for more than a decade, died in a tragic plane crash on April 4.

Members of the Helsinki Commission had high praise for the Senator, who was a Member of Congress for nearly 20 years.

"John Heinz will be remembered by his colleagues on the Commission and in Congress as a champion of persons everywhere who were less fortunate than himself," said Commission Chairman Steny Hoyer.

Commission Co-Chairman Dennis DeConcini said Heinz "was committed not only to the concept of democracy as we know it in this country, but also to the cause of human rights and individual freedoms throughout the world."

## Hoyer questions Roman

Chairman Steny Hoyer (D–MD) met with the Prime Minister of Romania, Petre Roman, on the morning of April 16. Prime Minister Roman, who is also the chairman of the National Salvation Front, was in Washington to meet with various U.S. officials to clear up some of the lingering questions and concerns regarding Romania.

Chairman Hoyer acknowledged that the human rights situation in Romania has greatly improved since the revolution of 1989. Nonetheless, he emphasized, there are a number of areas that continue to give the Commission pause.

Chairman Hoyer raised the issue of Romania's draft Constitution, asking in particular about provisions related to minority rights. He also questioned the new citizenship law, which states that "Romanian citizenship can be withdrawn from any person who, while abroad, perpetrates acts of utmost gravity that bring prejudice to the Romanian State's interest or impair Romania's prestige. . . ."

Despite Prime Minister Roman's assurances to the contrary, Chairman Hoyer felt this law could be used to intimidate or punish Romanians who criticized the Government while abroad.

Other points raised included access to printing facilities, the prospects for an independent television station, and the present role and influence of the numerous ex-Securitate members still employed by the Government.

While a number of important questions were raised, Chairman Hoyer felt the responses were less reassuring than he had hoped. He promised that the Commission will continue to press for progress on these issues and others as indicators of the Romanian government's commitment to democratization and reform.

## Gypsies describe problems

On March 23, a Helsinki Commission delegation led by Co-Chairman DeConcini met with representatives of the Hungarian Gypsy community in Budapest, Hungary

At roughly 5 percent of the total population, Gypsies represent the largest minority group in Hungary. Yet conditions of life within the Gypsy community have traditionally been significantly poorer than among the general populace.

The group said that while it is true that the new laws seem to provide for minorities, including Gypsies, the proposed budget does not include the financing to implement the changes the minorities' law would require. They also pointed to persistent discrimination in the administration of home loans and unemployment benefits, among other things.

Most disturbing, they said, is a deeply ingrained hostility toward the Gypsy community.

Mr. Jens Zsigo, spokesman for the Phralipe Independent Gypsy Organization, described the double burden the Gypsies bear. The first element is the myth projected on the Gypsy minority—that they are unteachable, alien, and undeserving. The second element is the unwritten law of discrimination they face in all areas of life.

Between 50–60 percent of Gypsy children have not finished primary school by age 15. And since the image has been presented that Gypsy parents are unfit to care for their young, the state sometimes takes the children away and institutionalizes them. The percentage of Gypsy children in Hungary's state institutions is a disproportionate 36 percent.

Co-Chairman DeConcini and the other commissioners stated their willingness to raise these issues in the context of the Helsinki process.

## CSCE staff meets with Kurds

Commission staff members met on two occasions in April with Kurds living in the United States who are involved in relief efforts and with human rights organizations.

Along with providing and organizing immediate humanitarian assistance, the Kurds emphasized the need to look beyond temporary measures such as the establishment of protected refugee camps in northern Iraq.

They believe that all the refugees wish to return to their homes, but added that this would be impossible without U.N. or other protection. They also pointed to obstacles erected by the Turkish government which have delayed aid in reaching the refugees, adding to their hardships. Unlike Kurds in Iran who have rushed aid to refugees in their country, the Turkish government has kept Iraqi Kurds separated from Turkish Kurds.

The Kurds expressed the need to place the Kurdish issue and democratic reform on the agenda of any regional Middle Eastern post-Gulf settlement.

*—By staff writers*

## FOR THE RECORD

SERBIAN PRESIDENT SLOBADAN MILOSEVIC, April 1991. "I hope (the other nationalities) will not be crazy enough to fight us. We might not be good workers, but we at least know how to fight well. . . . As you know, the borders are always dictated by the strong, never by the weak."

PRESIDENT MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, in a speech to hard-line military Communists, April 1991. "If 'decisiveness' is intended to mean a return to old methods, to suppression and violence, then I must tell you firmly—I will not resort to that."

RFSFR PRESIDENT BORIS YELTSIN, April 1991. "The right is preparing disasters for democracy in the Soviet Union. We have to act to avoid that—to prevent the right from advancing—and in that struggle we are always prepared to cooperate with President Gorbachev."

EL HASSAN BIN TALAL, Crown Prince of Jordan, at the National Conference in Response to the Gulf War, March 1991. "The moral weight of the Helsinki process can in this way be brought to bear on its neighbors in the Middle East. Such paradoxical side effects as the transfer of armaments from Europe to the Middle East in the wake of the CFE Treaty must be effectively tackled. Otherwise how can the integrity of the whole process in the Middle East be safeguarded?"

JIRI DIENSTBIER, Deputy Prime Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, April 1991. "If we wanted to pursue independent foreign policy of an independent Czechoslovakia, our first task was to get rid of what limited this independence of ours: the presence of Soviet troops on our territory. By the decision to start negotiations on their withdrawal we have at the same time taken the first step toward the dismantling of the Warsaw Treaty, with which barely any good was connected in our modern history."

VICTOR OSOVSKY, a leader of the striking miners in the Donetsk region of the Ukraine, March 1991. "Every Soviet citizen has the right to freely express his views, and that includes the right to strike. Of course, they can send in the army, but violence is always answered with violence."

MOSCOW CITY WORKER, April 1991. "We may be worse off today than we were five years ago, in every material way. But I don't care, because at least we have got a little air to breathe. We must never forget how stifling, how dead it was before."

## RECENT CSCE PUBLICATIONS

SOVIET AND BALTIC ELECTION REPORT—Single volume compilation of on-site Commission staff reports on parliamentary elections in the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and the Soviet Republics of Russia, Moldavia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia, with an introduction. 188 pages.

CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN ELECTION REPORTS—Single volume compilation of on-site Commission staff reports on the 1990 elections held in the GDR, Hungary, the Yugoslav Republics of Slovenia and Croatia, Romania, the Czech and Slovak Republic, and Bulgaria, with an introduction. 157 pages.

STAFF REPORT ON HOMELESSNESS—August 29, 1990. Examines the causes, responses, and symptoms associated with the growing homelessness problem in the United States, and examines the problem in relation to international human rights commitments. The report is part of the Commission's continuing review of U.S. efforts to meet Helsinki process commitments. 77 pages.

COMMISSION TRIP TO THE BALTIC STATES AND MOSCOW—Report on the Helsinki Commission's recent fact finding trip to Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Moscow. The 13-member Congressional delegation met with all three of the Baltic presidents, as well a President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Republic. 35 pages.

REPORT ON THE ESTONIAN REFERENDUM AND LATVIAN PUBLIC OPION POLL ON INDEPENDENCE—On-site Commission staff report on the March 3, 1991 votes on independence in Estonia and Latvia, with an introduction. 5 pages.


# DIGEST

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